

Exemplars scored with the Holistic Rubric Based on 6 Traits of Writing.

Prompt: Set 2

Writing

DIRECTIONS: Read the writing prompt below. Use the space on this page for your prewriting activity. Then write your first draft on the following two pages.

The President of the United States is coming to visit your school. He has been told that your school is very special and he wants to know why.

Write the body of a letter to the President to explain what makes your school so special.

Your letter should:

- **Target a specific audience and purpose.**
- **Organize clear ideas into meaningful sequence.**
- **Be in appropriate business letter form.**

Remember to edit for spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization.

AIMS Writing is a summative test of writing that is scored holistically. The prompt is revealed only at the time of testing. The student responses are produced in one sitting without any outside assistance during the writing process. Other than consulting a dictionary or a thesaurus, the student is writing entirely on his or her own. The AIMS score offers a snapshot of how well the student writes to the cold prompt on that day. Students who have the opportunity to write often in many different settings will better demonstrate the skills they have learned when they respond to the AIMS prompt.

The holistic rubric used for scoring AIMS Writing is based on the 6 Traits of Writing used as a teaching tool in Arizona classrooms. Strand 2 of the Academic Writing Standard is also based on the 6 Traits of Writing. In the classroom, teachers can focus on one or more traits according to their lesson plans, score writing for individual trait(s), and offer constructive feedback on the trait(s) to each student. Teaching writing at any level requires specific feedback, and using the 6 Traits of Writing is an excellent way to assist students in recognizing their strengths and weaknesses throughout the school year.

Scoring for AIMS with the holistic rubric emphasizes the traits that are most important for recognizing good writing. Ideas, content development, and organization are the heart of any piece of writing. Without clear, focused ideas developed logically with supporting details, a paper will not communicate the intended message. Voice, word choice, and fluency are the next most important elements of a written response. With appropriate vocabulary and the crafting of sentences, the writer can enhance ideas and connect with his or her audience, whether formally or informally. Conventions are also important, but even with good skills in conventions, a response will not communicate well without the other qualities.

Each of the following papers is assigned a score from 1 to 6. A score point 1 paper is inferior, a score point 2 paper is poor, a score point 3 paper is inadequate, a score point 4 paper is appropriate and acceptable, a score point 5 paper is excellent and skillful, and a score point 6 paper is sophisticated and skillful. Perfect papers do not exist; therefore, even those that score 5 or 6 will have some errors.

HOLISTIC RUBRIC BASED ON 6 TRAITS OF WRITING

<p>SCORE POINT 6</p> <p>Response is sophisticated and skillful in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exceptional clarity, focus, and control in topic development and organization that often show insight. • in-depth and/or creative exploration of the topic using rich, relevant, and credible details. • a strong, perhaps creative, beginning and a satisfying conclusion. • specifically and carefully chosen words that are skillfully crafted into phrases and sentences that enhance meaning. • intentional and committed interaction between the writer and the reader. • effective and/or creative use of a wide range of conventions with few errors. 	<p>SCORE POINT 5</p> <p>Response is excellent and skillful in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarity, focus, and control in topic development and organization. • a balanced and thorough exploration of the topic using relevant details. • an inviting beginning and a satisfying sense of closure. • a broad range of carefully chosen words crafted into phrases and varied sentences that sound natural. • awareness of the reader and commitment to the audience and topic. • effective use of a wide range of conventions with few errors. 	<p>SCORE POINT 4</p> <p>Response is appropriate and acceptable in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ideas adequately developed with a clear and coherent presentation of ideas with order and structure that can be formulaic. • relevant details that are sometimes general or limited; organization that is clear, but sometimes predictable. • a recognizable beginning and ending, although one or both may be somewhat weak. • effective word choice that is functional and, at times, shows interaction between writer and audience. • somewhat varied sentence structure with good control of simple constructions; a natural sound. • control of standard conventions although a wide range is not used; errors that do not impede readability.
<p>SCORE POINT 3</p> <p>Response is inadequate in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • broad or simplistic ideas that are understood but often ineffective. • attempts at organizing that are inconsistent or ineffective; beginnings and endings that are underdeveloped; repetitive transitional devices. • developmental details that are uneven, somewhat predictable or leave information gaps; details are not always placed effectively in the writing. • reliance on clichés and overused words that do not connect with the reader; limited audience awareness. • monotonous and sometimes misused words; sentences that may sound mechanical, although simple constructions are usually correct. • limited control of standard conventions with significant errors. 	<p>SCORE POINT 2</p> <p>Response is poor in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overly simplistic and sometimes unclear ideas that have insufficiently developed details • sequencing of ideas that is often just a list; missing or ineffective details that require reader inference to comprehend and follow. • missing beginning and/or ending. • repetitive, monotonous, and often misused words are awkwardly strung into sentences that are difficult to read because they are either choppy or rambling; most sentences begin with repetitive noun + verb. • lack of audience awareness. • little control of basic conventions resulting in errors impeding readability. 	<p>SCORE POINT 1</p> <p>Response is inferior in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of purpose or ideas and sequencing. • organization that obscures the main point. • an attempt that is too short to offer coherent development of an idea, if it is stated. • extremely limited vocabulary that shows no commitment to communicating a message. • sentences with confusing word order that may not permit oral reading. • severe and frequent errors in conventions.

Grade 5

Score Point 1 (Set 2)

presit Bouhe like are
school it is the best school
every and the clenst school
and the bist school every
presit Bouhe

The paper demonstrates no purpose. The reader can discern fragments of ideas: “best school” and “clenst school,” but there is no development to clarify them. Vocabulary is limited. Sentences are confusing. There are frequent and severe conventions errors. The response is too short to show organization or development.

The response is not a 2 because the attempt is too short to offer coherent development of an idea.

Grade 5

Score Point 2 (Set 2)

Mr. President

The reason our school is special is because
we do really good. We always follow the rules. We never lie
we work hard. We never fight we listen to the teachers. We do what
we are told to do and never argue. We whould be honored to have you here.

The ideas in this paper are overly simplistic and not developed with details (“... we do really good.”). The sequencing of ideas is merely a list: “follow the rules,” “work hard,” “never fight,” etc. Sentences fall into monotonous patterns: “We always,” “We never,” “We do,” and “We whould.” Errors do not impede readability but editing is required.

The response is not a 1 because it has a purpose and communicates an idea. The response is not a 3 because the writing lacks details.

Grade 5

Score Point 3 (Set 2)

Dear President,

I think my school is really special because everyone is very nice to each other. We have a very safe and big playground. Every single one of the teachers is very nice. The teachers will help you when you need it.

Another one of the reasons I think our school is special because get out at 3:00 Monday through Thursday but on Friday we get out 12:30. In the lunch room we get really good food. On Monday have Monday morning meeting. If you are in 5th or 6th grade you get your choice of band or orchestra.

I think _____ is the best school I ever been to.

Simplistic ideas are understood (“everyone is nice to each other”), but developmental details are uneven (“because get out at 3:00 Monday through Thursday”) and not always placed effectively. The relationship among the ideas and details is often not clear. “On Monday have Monday morning meeting. If you are in 5th or 6th grade you get your choice of band or orchestra.” both a beginning and an ending are present, but they are not developed. Monotonous and repetitive words do not connect with the reader: “nice to each other,” “is very nice,” “really good food,” “I think _____ is the best school I ever been to.” There is a limited control of conventions.

The response is not a 2 because it contains developmental details and a beginning and ending. The response is not a 4 because details are uneven and ideas are not adequately developed.

Grade 5

Score Point 4a (Set 2)

Dear President of the United States,
I would like to tell you why our school is so special. The first thing I would like to tell you about is our discipline. If we forgot our homework we have to sit out at recess and then we have lunch detention to check it. The second thing I would like to tell you about is our nice bathrooms. They are always clean and nothing is ever broken. The third thing I want to tell you about is our nice books. All of the books never have torn pages or are in bad condition. The fourth thing I would like to tell you about is the food. The food is really good and sometimes the lunch ladies serve pizza. That is my favorite. The fifth thing I would like to tell you about is our playgrounds. The playgrounds never have trash on them and the equipment is very nice. The last thing I would like to tell you about is the fun events we have. Those events are field day, pajama day, crazy hair day, and twin day. I love those events. That is why my school is so special.

Yours truly,
R.

The writer has clearly presented adequately developed ideas and used relevant details as support. “The fourth thing I would like to tell you about is the food. The food is really good and sometimes the lunch ladies serve pizza. That is my favorite.” The order and structure are formulaic and predictable with the numbering of each supporting idea. Both a recognizable beginning and ending are present, although neither one is strong or inviting. The words are functional. Sentences are varied in some places (“If we forgot our homework we have to sit out at recess and then we have lunch detention to check it.”) but the same structure is often repeated (“The first thing,” “The second thing,” etc.). Conventions are very good with only a few errors.

The response is not a 3 because it includes relevant details and there is some audience awareness. The response is not a 5 because it lacks a well-developed, inviting beginning and relies on repetitive transitional devices.

Grade 5

Score Point 5a (Set 2)

There are many reasons why my school,
is so special.

First and foremost is our principal and teachers. They make coming to school so much fun. We have different activities such as band, strings, basketball and so on. Our principal makes our school a cleaner and better place for all of us. We have class contests and we get sandy every once in a while from our principal. We have an assembly every month so that we can get a chance to eat pizza with the principal, and so we can win awards. Our principal and our teachers are very good role models for all of us. They are kind, responsible, respectful, and caring.

Another reason why is so special is because our basketball teams. They work so hard every day and accomplish their goals. Most of all they do what they love to do. They too are very good role models. They show us that you can do whatever you set your mind to. They also show us that if you don't get something right the first time try again and never give up.

The last reason is of course us, the kids. Kids are the one who make so special. Their artwork and creativity is hung up all

over the school. That is why _____ is so creative. We listen to our teachers and we respect others, we also clean up garbage around our school so we can make _____ cleaner and nicer. We all have goals to accomplish and some of us accomplish them at school, but _____ wouldn't be anything if we didn't have the teachers and principal we have.

Those are some of the reasons why my school is so special to me.

The response has clarity, focus, and control. The development is balanced and thorough with relevant details. "First and foremost is our principal and teachers." "Our principal and teachers are very good role models. They are kind, responsible, respectful, and caring." "Another reason why _____ is so special is because our basketball teams. They work so hard every day and accomplish their goals." "_____ kids are the one who make _____ so special. Their artwork and creativity is hung up all over our school." While both a beginning and an ending are present, they are the weakest part of this writing. The organization is very clear and controlled, but there is no evidence of letter formatting. The broad range of carefully chosen words (foremost, responsible, respectful, accomplish, creativity) are crafted into varied sentences that not only sound natural, but are also carefully structured. "We have class contests and we get candy every once in a while from our principal." "They also show us that if you don't get something right the first time try again and never give up." Audience awareness and commitment to the topic is present. Conventions are well done with only a few errors.

The response is not a 4 because of the carefully chosen words, the varied sentences, and the focus and control in the content development and organization. It is not a 6 because the beginning and ending are somewhat weak, and the exploration of the topic is not in-depth or creative.

Grade 5

Score Point 6a (Set 2)

Dear Mr. President,

Elementary School is a very special and interesting school. Let's talk about how come it's so particular.

You see, is a school that likes to get involved in certain functions. Being new at this school, I don't know all of them, but here it goes. Volleyball is one that I think is only available to girls in grades 6th, 7th, and 8th. It's a privilege for the girls because they learn all the techniques you should know for volleyball. This isn't as active, but we also have a reading program. It's called Wrangling Reader, and you get a sheet to fill in how many hours you've read. This is a required assignment for the students of

There is a leadership program that all fifth graders do on every Thursday. We get split into groups and go into a different fifth grade teacher's classroom for that week. We learn about how to be a good example and how to react to a bully etc. This is helpful to all students because it shows how leadership works

in the world.

_____ is a very organized, clean school. One reason for this is because of the Janitor's constant appearance. He is in the cafeteria when there's a spill, and it's no trouble for him at all. Another is most kids know that littering is wrong, so they will throw their trash in the waste basket. Some kids are even more caring about their school, and if they see an old soda can under a bench, they'll pick it up. Our school isn't very old, so it looks more new and more pretty.

Once you get into Middle school, _____ gives you much more privileges. You get to fund-raise magazines and the money goes to the school. But the cool part is, you get a prize for how much you fund raise! Many people get what's called the chicken. There's velcro at the chicken's rear end, and once you open it up, there's your prize. It could be certain amounts of money, whatever! This is a fun, fun program for middle schoolers. It's too bad I have to wait another year.

As you can see from my letter, _____ is special for many reasons. Are you flabbergasted now that you know about my school?

Sincerely,
5th Grader M

The writer develops and organizes the response with exceptional clarity, showing insight in places. The in-depth, credible details are easy to follow and informative. “This isn’t as active, but we also have a reading program. It’s called Wranglin Reader, and you get a sheet to fill in how many hours you’ve read.” “Another is most kids know that littering is wrong, so they will throw their trash in the waste basket. Some kids are even more caring about their school, and if they see an old soda can under a bench, they’ll pick it up.” Words are effective in relating the information and the sentences are varied and structured well. “(name of school) is a very clean, organized school. One reason for this is because of the Janitor’s constant appearance. He’s in the cafeteria when there’s a spill and it’s no trouble for him at all.” The writer connects with the reader: “Are you flabbergasted now that you know about my school?” Conventions are strong and nearly always correct.

The response is not a 5 because of the intentional and committed interaction between the writer and the reader.